

**PARK CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
WORK SESSION NOTES  
JANUARY 12, 2004**

Present: Jim Barth, Bruce Erickson, Michael O'Hara, Bob Powers, Jack Thomas, Andrew Volkman, Diane Zimney, Patrick Putt, Ray Milliner, Brooks Robinson, Kirsten Whetstone, Jonathan Weidenhamer, Eric DeHaan, Tim Twardowski

**WORK SESSION ITEMS**

**Treasure Hill Conditional Use Permit for single, multi-family, hotel, and commercial uses**

The applicant, Pat Sweeney, provided a conceptual presentation of traffic with respect to the Treasure Hill project. He commented that the snowfall during the past week was a good reminder of what can happen in a ski town and that even without the snow, there are days when Park City experiences resort gridlock. He stated that he could not pretend to solve the problem, but he did not believe this project would contribute to it. He noted that weather cannot be controlled, and bad weather can create snow lock. Roads can narrow to one lane, and people use them to walk on. Another factor is that people who pay taxes expect to use the roads. He recalled that in 1986 the City decided the current configuration of this property was in the best interests of the City.

Mr. Sweeney listed the mitigators on this project.

1. Pedestrian Connections. These include the cabriolet to the Town Lift base, various footpaths and stairs that connect to the Town Lift Base, Heber & Park and Main & 6<sup>th</sup> Street. It is believed that these connections will help reduce the number of cars.
2. Service Design. The service design of this project is centralized, and the arrival point for visitors and the service areas are off-street and covered. People will not be allowed to park adjacent to this project at the Lowell/Empire turn. Mr. Sweeney believed this would be a huge advantage compare to single-family homes, driveways, or a through street into the area.
3. Ski to/ski from this project and Old Town. The ski access provided by this project will keep people from driving to the Park City Mountain Resort while allowing them to stay in town and walk to Main Street.
4. On-site amenities. If the weather is bad, people staying at Treasure Hill can remain inside and use the amenities and support commercial associated with the project.
5. Cabriolet. The cabriolet will act as a bus connection to avoid running City buses up Lowell/Empire.
6. No new public roads. This project will not add public roads, so the number of roads being plowed will not increase, but this project will provide additional tax revenue to fund plowing the existing roads.

Mr. Sweeney presented an informal traffic study which was conducted the previous weekend and stated that he felt it provided a sense of traffic numbers in various locations.

Mike Sweeney stated that he spent Saturday, January 8, 2005, at the Park City Mountain Resort and driving up and down Lowell/Empire, which was a single-track road, in his small car. From 7:00 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. he took traffic counts going north and south on Lowell, only counting cars going up the street or coming out of the street, and counted a total of 14 cars, or 28 cars per hour. During that time he was also able to count cars on Empire Avenue because he had parked in the Mountain Resort parking lot where he could see both streets. He counted 20 cars on Empire. Later that morning he counted 256 cars on Park Avenue going north and south. From 2:45 p.m. to 2:50 p.m. he conducted another count. During that time Lowell Avenue was quiet, Empire experienced a little traffic, and Park Avenue had 1,200 cars. Between 3:05 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. on Lowell and Empire, the adjusted numbers are 34 and 98 per hour, and about that same time Park Avenue had 1,200 cars. Between 7:35 p.m. and 7:45 p.m. there was no traffic on Lowell, a total of 10 vehicles on Empire, and 900 vehicles on Park Avenue. Mike Sweeney noted that the number of buses to the Mountain Resort and the number of transportation vehicles and taxis going into Marriott Mountainside was significant compared to the number of private vehicles at that location. He also noticed a number of skiers and snowboarders using the road at that time. He noted that the people who plowed their driveways would move the snow to the other side of the road. As they kept plowing, the road would get smaller until the City alleviated the problem by trucking the snow out.

Gary Horton, a traffic consultant, reviewed the formal traffic study. He recalled that two traffic studies were previously completed, one in the 1980's for the Silver Mountain Development, and the second in 1996 for the Park City Village. The Park City Village study accounted for the traffic coming out of the Treasure Hill development. Mr. Horton referred to a presentation he gave in May 2004 which summarized those two studies. At that time a complete traffic study was recommended, and that study was completed and submitted in July 2004. Mr. Horton stated that he consulted with the City on the areas of interest for the traffic study, including project access points and six intersections which would potentially be impacted by the proposed development. Mr. Horton stated that the traffic information was gathered on June 16, 2004. He discussed non-ski days compared to ski days. Since the information was taken on a non-ski day, he explained how the information was replicated to achieve numbers for a typical ski day. The end result was a 71% influx in the numbers to represent traffic on a ski day. At 71%, the estimated number is 100 vehicles on Lowell Avenue and 100 on Empire during the peak hour. He stated that the study was very conservative in analyzing the numbers. Mr. Horton explained that he used the applicable Land Use Code to estimate the traffic that would be generated from the proposed development. The trips are generated based on either the number of units for a condominium or town home or the gross floor area for commercial specialty retail. He reviewed a table showing the expected morning and evening trips entering and exiting the proposed development.

Mr. Horton commented that some items in the proposed project which will result in trip reduction are the Main Street Gondola, pedestrian stairs and paths, and alternate modes of mass transportation. He stated that an informal survey was conducted. They contacted Marriott MountainSide, Marriott Summit Watch, and the Deer Valley Ski Resort and found that 70% of their trips are alternative mode trips and 30% are private trips. Using that information, he took a conservative approach and assumed that only 30% of personal vehicles would be reduced, although he believed it would actually be greater than 30%. He reviewed how traffic was distributed to the different intersection access points combined with existing ski day and non-ski day traffic and how the intersections and access points were analyzed. He explained that Park Avenue and the Empire/Deer Valley intersection is currently a problem at certain times of the year and offered alternatives to alleviate those problems, such as human traffic control or additional turning lanes. He noted that Park City and UDOT have also discussed this intersection. The Silver King Drive and Empire Avenue intersection experience congestion on limited days during the evening peak. That problem cannot be fixed without fixing Park Avenue, and other alternatives include human traffic control and a traffic signal and/or roundabout. When the remaining intersections were analyzed, they were determined to be a level of service A or B for now and in the future. Mr. Horton commented on the construction traffic plan and identified the anticipated construction route. The benefit of the proposed plan is right hand turns coming in and out of the project. He reviewed the types of service vehicles anticipated for the project and stated that he believed the Swede Alley rules of the Park City Code should apply. One benefit is that parking for service vehicles will be accommodated on site.

David Eldredge reviewed traffic circulation through the site, starting with arrival of guests and accommodations for transit-type vehicles. He noted that all activity will be under ground and off the street. He indicated an area under the upper plaza which will be allotted for central receiving and a garage distribution center for all size vehicles. The area will be concealed and out of the traffic lanes so it will not obstruct the flow of traffic.

Mr. Horton discussed signage coming into the site and indicated potential sign locations. He commented on parking considerations during construction and post construction and explained that, during construction, the first issue will be to make sure the initial grading plan accommodates on-site parking while the parking structure is being built. Once the structure is built, it will accommodate parking for construction vehicles. After construction is completed, he recommended that no parking be allowed on either side of the street adjacent to the project. Another item would be to limit parking to one side of the street on Lowell and Empire, with no parking at the turn on Lowell/Empire. Mr. Horton made the following recommendations: Construct the gondola and operate it during peak hours, pedestrian accommodations, limit parking on Lowell and Empire, prohibit parking adjacent to the project, continue to make snow removal on Lowell and Empire a priority, encourage construction and service vehicles to follow the route described, and encourage guests to use alternative modes of transportation.

Chair Barth noted that this item is not scheduled for a public hearing and asked if the Planning Commission would like to take public comment. Director Putt suggested that the Planning Commission allow questions and comments.

Chair Barth requested public input.

Annie Louis Garda stated that she and her husband live on North Star Drive, a private road off of Lowell Avenue. She stated that she was speaking for herself and the North Star Homeowners Association. She addressed safety issues related to traffic and stated that every Staff person she spoke with has seen traffic problems in the context of intersections and high peak traffic times. However, these are non-issues for people who negotiate upper Empire Avenue. Ms. Garda stated that their concerns are two-fold. From the first snowfall until late spring, upper Empire is a one-way street with very few places where one can pull over to let other cars or people pass. The second issue is that there are no sidewalks and there is no place for sidewalks, and every person has to walk in the street. When there is snow, they have to walk in the middle of the street. She believed the traffic report was a best guess estimate of how many vehicles will be added to the current situation. She provided photographs of Lowell and Empire Avenue and noted that most of the photos were taken before last week's heavy snowfall. She pointed out pedestrians in each photograph and stated that there are there all day long on the streets. Ms. Garda stated that these are not unusual snow conditions. Park City cannot boast about having the greatest snow on earth and having it in abundance and then say that is an unusual situation. If there is not great snow, people will not visit the proposed project, and snow and people come together. She stated that, since mid-November, she has not been able to go from one end of Empire to the other without pulling over for traffic or pedestrians. At least twice a year the road is clogged with an accident or delivery trucks, and it is necessary to back up, turn around, and go the other direction. Empire is safe only to the extent that drivers are polite and pedestrians are careful. Adding another 300 cars per day with people who do not care about these neighborhoods and truckers trying to make delivery schedules will create a recipe for disaster. She asked who will be responsible when a delivery truck slides into a family walking to the resort or when emergency vehicles cannot make it up the roads because they are clogged with trucks, pedestrians, and additional cars. She did not believe the traffic report addressed those concerns. She referred to the statement on page 5 that one could expect the road to be 25 feet wide. She stated that she used her tape measure and measured 22 feet at the widest part of the road. Further down on Empire before Crescent Tram, the road measured 17 feet, and in the area where cars are always parked, the road measured 8 feet. Ms. Garda stated that she was bothered by the fact that there are no pedestrians in any of the counts and that all the traffic counts are taken below the resort. Nothing was done above the resort where all the problems occur. She questioned the credibility of the chart on page 10 showing how many

people will come to the resort at different times of day. The chart indicates that no one will show up at the commercial venues between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., which means no one will be there to serve breakfast or rent skis. The fallacy of that statement made her wonder about the other numbers in the report. She noted that page 12 talks about trying to make traffic come up Lowell Avenue and go down Empire. She noted that the chart presented by Mr. Sweeney shows that at certain times of day, eight times as many cars go up Empire as Lowell, and that is because Empire is easier to go up. She could not picture a semi truck coming up Empire, turning up Manor, and turning up Lowell to reach its destination and felt that was an unrealistic expectation. Ms. Garda referred to the rating system on page 16 and noted that it failed to mention that Empire is a level of service F in the winter. Page 16 also mentions a 1% truck traffic increase, and she believed this was unrealistic, because once the project is built, they will see more truck traffic than the 1% projected. She referred to the comment about following Swede Alley rules on page 21 and noted that Swede Alley does not have residential areas like Empire and Lowell Avenue. Page 23 refers to not allowing parking within 200 feet of the entrances to this project, and Ms. Garda noted that people live there and do not have garages. The report does not suggest where they might park their cars if they cannot park on the street. Page 23 also talks about lowering and planting the berm at the circle, and Ms. Garda noted that several weeks ago the Planning Commission approved a new house in that location. Ms. Garda felt that construction traffic was not adequately addressed. Fire regulations require that the buildings be concrete and steel, which means a lot of cement mixers and steel-bearing trucks going up this narrow road, and safety issue have not been addressed. Ms. Garda stated that she tried to find ways to resolve the issues, and the only solution she could see is to create an additional entrance and exit to the property. She hoped the Planning Commission would be more creative in resolving these issues.

Peter Barnes stated that his client owns the adjacent land on the Lowell/Empire loop. He has designed three houses on that corner, and the berm does affect the houses that have been approved. He did not believe the impressions received from looking at the photographs represent the reality on the ground. He stated that his client is flying in from Australia tonight and will hopefully provide him with comments for the next public hearing. Mr. Barnes noted that a traffic study only addresses traffic flow, delays, and speed of traffic, and it has no bearing, influence, or suggestion as to the quality of life for the people who live on the adjacent residential streets. If quality of life is part of the Planning Commission's decision, they need to look beyond the numbers. He disagreed that most vehicles arriving would enter from Lowell Avenue. He stated that he drives up there on a regular basis, and he always drives along Empire Avenue. He believed this could be a great project, but a traffic study that only deals in numbers and ignores other aspects is only half the story.

Mike McAvoy, a resident on Woodside, commented on the structural stability of the road surfaces and the grade level and felt this would be a major issue with construction traffic. He expressed concern with emergency vehicle access. He commented on the quality of

life for the residents on Lowell, Empire and Manor, and noted that the path of least resistance will also impact traffic on Woodside, Norfolk, Crescent Tram, and 8<sup>th</sup> Street. Quality of life issues such as construction trucks, dust, and child safety are just a few of his concerns related to this project. He volunteered his support to help rally the neighborhood for the next meeting.

Carol Larson, a resident on Lowell Avenue, invited the Planning Commission to drive up Lowell Avenue. She stated that she had to stop five times. It is one lane and barely allows room for an SUV. She felt strongly that everyone should see it now while there is snow on the road.

Community Development Director Patrick Putt read into the record an e-mail from Carol Shepard who expressed concern about the volume and frequency of cars, buses, and shuttles that this project will project onto Crescent Tram and 8<sup>th</sup> Street. She stated that the neighborhood cannot support the existing number of cars, let alone the massive increase this project will add. Director Putt also read an e-mail from Abby McNulty who owns three homes between the 9<sup>th</sup> Street and 10<sup>th</sup> Street block of Norfolk Avenue. She was concerned that this project would create traffic congestion on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and cause increased traffic dangers along Norfolk. She preferred to see the impacts of this development diverted to streets that can accommodate the increase in cars and traffic.

Commissioner Erickson clarified that there is an existing development agreement in effect for this project, and the Planning Commission is reviewing the project under the terms of that development agreement. While they will give as much credence as they can to the traffic situation, the Planning Commission is still bound by a legal contract. If the residents pack the room with people wanting to comment on traffic, they also need to pack the room when the Planning Commission tries to find a solution to allow the development to move ahead in its current form under the terms of a valid agreement.

Commissioner Powers referred to the statement regarding a 20-year build out and asked what will happen to Lowell and Empire. He felt those roads will have to be rebuilt along the way. Planner Kirsten Whetstone noted that language in the development agreement states that at some point Empire may need to be reconstructed. Additional language refers to how much this project will participate in that reconstruction. She reported that she spoke with the Public Works Department and was told that upper Empire and upper Lowell are not a high priority streets for plowing, which would explain the higher number of cars counted by Mike Sweeney on Park Avenue, because Park Avenue is a Priority One street. She felt that the reconstruction of Empire and Lowell and the ability to provide more off-street parking would need to be discussed at a future meeting.

Commissioner O'Hara commented that the analysis indicates there would be a 30-35% increase in traffic over build out. He has lived on upper Lowell and upper Empire, and he

understands the concerns. He understands that Park City is a resort town, and these are Old Town streets packed with snow that require a lot of patience. However, the Planning Commission needs to look at the compatibility of this project with the neighborhood. He was not concerned with slowing down traffic as much as he was with human health and safety. He felt this was similar to Chatham Crossing. He approved of the mitigators proposed by the applicant, but they also need to look at ways to mitigate the human health and safety issues.

Commissioner Thomas stated that he had questions about traffic impacts and life safety issues and asked Mr. Horton to rate the impacts. Mr. Horton stated that the impacts are minimal in the summer. He was unsure about the winter months, because it depends on plowing. Mr. Horton discussed the capacity of a 24-foot-wide road and what would hinder that capacity and suggested that the impacts would probably be moderate in the winter. In terms of traffic mitigators, Commissioner Thomas believed they were creating a central place with this project, and a central place creates more demand and inclination to visit. He asked if the mitigators have the potential to increase traffic demand. Mr. Horton agreed and stated that he believed his report did show additional traffic within the project. He stated that, until projects are built, it is hard to determine whether the traffic will be generated by someone coming from Marriott Mountainside to the resort or someone coming from somewhere else. He explained that the trip generation in his report accounts for a certain number of vehicles per hour based on the square footage of a restaurant. Commissioner Thomas asked if the life safety issues relative to the residential community along Empire and Lowell rates at no impact or a serious impact. Mr. Horton believed the number of vehicles would be minimal in the summer. Winter impacts would depend on how quickly the road is plowed and how well it is cleared of snow. He felt that was difficult to analyze because the impacts fluctuate in the winter.

Commissioner Volkman recalled a project on King Road where the Planning Commission specifically conditioned approval on the basis that it would not allow nightly rentals because they worried about tourists trying to navigate the road in snowy conditions. Commissioner Volkman believed this road was comparable and that there are serious health, safety, and welfare issues for the neighborhood and for tourists who are not accustomed to this type of road.

Chair Barth agreed with Commissioner Erickson that this development project is vested and has a development agreement in place. He also agreed with the comments that traffic is a big issue on this project. He noted that the Sweeney family is an excellent family in the area and is passionate about Park City. After listening to the Mayor's comments on the radio, he invited the Sweeneys to enter into a discussion with the City regarding the possibility of buying down some of the density in this area. Mr. Sweeney expressed a willingness to enter into discussions with the City and stated that the course of those discussions would determine their response and position.

Commissioner Erickson requested that the Staff be sure that the public has the proper information to provide input. He outlined options the Planning Commission could consider and felt it was clear that they need to take the necessary time for discussion. It is also clear that the traffic situation is nearly impossible. Despite the traffic situation, he wanted the applicant and the public to make their comments understanding all the consequences. Chair Barth asked if that understanding should include consideration of a potential buyout. Commissioner Erickson agreed that it should. Director Putt verified with Commissioner Erickson that he was asking for a decision matrix of the consequences of various decisions and the potential next steps, and he offered to generate a basic matrix.

Commissioner Barth announced that the Pod B-2 Empire Pass conditional use permit to remove contaminated soils has been removed from the agenda this evening, and if anyone came to make comment on that item, the Planning Commission will hear their comments at that time on the agenda. The item will be continued for a decision on January 26.

### **Downtown Capital Improvement Projects**

Director Putt provided a brief update and preliminary look at a Conditional Use Permit for capital improvement projects located in the downtown area. The objective this evening is to introduce the scope of the project and to start discussing five points outlined in the staff report. The project involves three primary components, the first one being the addition on the China Bridge, which will be located directly to the north of the existing China Bridge. This will involve the creation of 329 new parking spaces for a net gain of 250 spaces. The second component will be a slight realignment of Swede Alley to accommodate a downtown community gathering space or plaza. The third component will include seismic upgrade and retrofitting of the Marsac Building. Director Putt requested input and initial reaction from the Commissioners.

Colin Hilton, head of City projects, introduced Rick Frerichs, lead designer and principal of FFKR Architects, the design team. Mr. Hilton explained that a series of projects have been proposed in the downtown area, and numerous meetings and studies have preceded this discussion. The City Council formed a task force consisting of City Council and Planning Commission members, residents, and business owners in the fall of 2003 to look at improvement projects in the downtown area, including the health and vitality of downtown, transportation and parking issues, and pedestrian access and walkways. The task force studies resulted in a series of recommendations that were brought to the City Council. The three main recommendations were to address parking supply and provide better access from Swede Alley and Marsac Avenue, and to create a central plaza or gathering area. Previous studies have pointed to an expansion of parking to the north side of the existing China Bridge structure. The second recommendation was the idea of creating a central gathering and activity space, and the concept of the Town Plaza began to develop. The third recommendation was to continue improvements to pedestrian corridors and walkways